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New York

President: Ms. Al Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 104

Appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Letter from the President of the Security Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/61/501)

Draft resolution (A/61/L.3)

The President: The Assembly has before it document A/61/501, containing a letter dated 9 October 2006 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the President of the General Assembly. Members will recall that on that same day, I transmitted copies of that letter to all Member States.

In this regard, I now call on the President of the Security Council, who will report to the Assembly on the work undertaken by the Council on this matter.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): It is an honour and privilege for me, in my capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October, to address the General Assembly in order to convey to it the recommendation of the Security Council for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

At its 5547th meeting, held in private on 9 October 2006, the Security Council adopted by acclamation resolution 1715 (2006) concerning the recommendation for the appointment of the Secretary-General.

I shall now read out the text of the resolution. Resolution 1715 (2006) reads as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Having considered the question of the recommendation for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

"Recommends to the General Assembly that Mr. Ban Ki-moon be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a term of office from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2011."

Since, early this year, the Security Council pledged to conclude its part in the selection process by October, the Council is pleased that, by adopting its recommendation for the appointment on 9 October, the Council met this goal. The Security Council believes that early action upon the appointment by the General Assembly would ensure ample time for transition between the current and incoming Secretaries-General.

On behalf of the Security Council, I would like to express appreciation to all Member States that presented candidates as part of the selection process.

Finally, I would like to thank you, Madam, for having convened this meeting expeditiously following the recommendation made to the General Assembly by the Security Council.

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06-56975 (E)

The President: In connection with the recommendation of the Security Council, the General Assembly has before it a draft resolution issued as document A/61/L.3, which was made available on the initiative of the Chairman of the Group of Asian States and which enjoys the support of the other four regional groups.

The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/61/L.3. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/61/L.3 by acclamation?

The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation (resolution 61/3).

The President: I now request the Chief of Protocol to escort His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon to the platform.

The Chief of Protocol escorted the Secretary-General-designate, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to the platform.

The President: I have the honour to announce that His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon has been appointed by acclamation Secretary-General of the United Nations for a term of office beginning on 1 January 2007 and ending on 31 December 2011.

The General Assembly has just adopted the resolution on the appointment of His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon as Secretary-General of the United Nations. This is a historic day for the Organization as it continues to evolve and live up to the values and principles of the Charter.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to extend my sincerest congratulations to Minister Ban Ki-moon on his appointment as the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations. I am deeply honoured to welcome him to the United Nations, an Organization which is not unfamiliar to him and to which he has devoted a considerable part of his outstanding diplomatic career.

He is one of the most prominent figures of the Republic of Korea, a peaceful nation that has made a remarkable transformation to become a stable democracy and a vibrant economy during the past three decades. His appointment comes at a time when the Organization is deeply engaged in a wide-ranging reform process, outlined by world leaders in September last year.

We are grateful to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who has played a major role in shaping a clear and comprehensive vision to address the many global challenges confronting us. I am confident that the Organization will build upon its past achievements and move ahead to become an even more effective body under the leadership of Secretary-General-designate Ban Ki-moon.

We have still before us many challenges, from extreme poverty and hunger to armed conflicts, disease and international terrorism; and we have yet to find the most appropriate ways to make globalization work for all.

The credibility of this Organization will be tested by our ability to continue to work in unity and meet the expectations of the millions of people of the world. Today's decision gives us hope that we are ready to take collective responsibility and act with determination on matters of common concern.

I appeal to all members to extend to Secretary-General-designate Ban Ki-moon your utmost support to ensure a smooth transition as he prepares to assume his term in office. He can be assured of my full cooperation to facilitate his work. May I take this opportunity to wish him all success in his upcoming endeavour.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: Let me extend my warmest congratulations to my successor, Mr. Ban Ki-moon. Let me also congratulate all of you, the Member States, on this choice.

I am delighted that Mr. Ban's election turned out this way — early and orderly. Surely, this is the way we would wish all Secretaries-General to be elected. I would also say that the process worked well because Member States were determined to achieve an early outcome and because the winning candidate had exceptional qualifications.

I think everyone here recognizes the depth of Mr. Ban's experience, the breadth of his connections and his ability to cooperate effectively at the highest levels. But, as someone who has known and worked with him for several years, I think that others will soon discover something else — something more — if they do not see it already: a future Secretary-General who is exceptionally attuned to the sensitivities of countries

and constituencies in every continent; a man with a truly global mind at the helm of the world's only universal Organization.

Mr. Ban's early election will give us a head start in ensuring the smoothest possible transition. I recall, at the beginning of the process, I said "I wish the General Assembly and the [Security] Council do not do to my successor what they did to me". I was elected on Friday, 13 December.

I would presume to give him only one piece of advice for when he takes office next year: try to make full use of the unparalleled resource found in the staff of the Organization. Their commitment to the United Nations is the greatest asset of the United Nations and has been the surest source of strength for me in my work as Secretary-General.

More than 50 years ago, the first Secretary-General of the United Nations, Trygve Lie, used the following words in greeting his successor, Dag Hammarskjöld: "You are about to take over the most impossible job on Earth". While that may be true, I would add that it is also the best possible job on Earth.

There will be time to wish him well more fully as we reach the moment of transfer of authority towards the end of the year. Until then, my colleagues and I will do all we can to assist him as he prepares for the road ahead.

As he readies himself to take over, I wish him both strength and courage. He will need those attributes, but, equally, he will need a healthy sense of humour — which I know he possesses in abundance. So he must not forget to have fun along the way. I wish him the very best of luck.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Gambia, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): The Group of African States heartily congratulates Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, on his election by acclamation as the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations, replacing Mr. Kofi Annan, who will be retiring from the Organization at the end of December 2006.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon brings to the position a wealth of experience as an accomplished diplomat, administrator and scholar. In fulfilling those roles in his native land, he was exposed to a mix of experiences that has prepared him well for the job of Secretary-General of the United Nations. In less than 40 years, the Republic of Korea rose from the status of least developed country to become an industrialized, highly developed nation. Today, it is the eleventh largest economy in the world. Mr. Ban Ki-moon lived through that period of transformation and in fact contributed to it in no small measure. That experience will surely come in handy as he leads us forward with the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Since the end of the Korean War, which Mr. Ban Ki-moon lived through, his country has been involved as an active partner in peacebuilding and conflict prevention and resolution. He has played important roles in that process and I am sure will bring his hands-on experiences to bear on the work of the Organization in those very important areas, which are at the very heart of the mandate of the United Nations. His coming on board at a time when developments in his own region of the world call for wisdom and cautious diplomacy can also augur well for our efforts to mediate the very complex security situation that is now unfolding in the Korean peninsula. I am sure he will also help us make progress more generally on the disarmament issues and move us forward on the denuclearization agenda.

The immediate preoccupation is with reform of the Organization. As an astute administrator, Mr. Ban Ki-moon comes to the job with the tools that should make it easier for us to achieve faster results, especially with management reform, but also with the reform of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and, indeed, the General Assembly. He knows the house well, having served in his country's delegation and having been the chief adviser and manager of the office of the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

Africa looks forward to working with him on the many issues of priority and concern to us, from peacekeeping and peacebuilding to poverty and all the other areas identified under the special needs of Africa chapter of the Outcome Document that was adopted by the Summit of heads of State and Government last year. We will lend him all the support and cooperation he requires as he takes on his important responsibilities. We congratulate him once more and wish him the very best.

Let me seize this opportunity to commend our outgoing Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his tremendous contributions to multilateralism and the principles and purposes of the United Nations. We are indeed proud and very grateful that, through his exemplary service to the Organization for over a decade, Africa was able to play a lead role in the maintenance of world peace, the promotion of sustainable human development, and the prevention and resolution of conflict. We thank him for his many years of invaluable service to humanity and wish him well in his future endeavours.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Japan, who will speak on behalf of the Asian States.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): It is indeed a great honour for me today to address this body for a second time, only through a coincidence. Nevertheless, it is a great joy for me to do so as the representative of a country that is one of the immediate neighbours of the Republic of Korea, the country from which our next Secretary-General hails.

On behalf of the States members of the Asian Group, it is my great pleasure and honour to most warmly welcome the appointment of Mr. Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea as the next Secretary-General and to extend our most sincere and heartfelt congratulations to him on his appointment.

The Asian Member States aspired from early on in the selection process that one of our sons, daughters, brothers or sisters from the region would be given the opportunity to serve at the helm of our Organization, 35 years after the third Secretary-General, U Thant. That aspiration has today been realized through a unanimous decision of the General Assembly following a recommendation unanimously arrived at in the Security Council. And for that, the Asian Member States wish to express their gratitude to the States members of all regional groups for the understanding and support they have shown for that aspiration and the candidature of Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

In that connection, the States members of the Asian Group wish to extend special thanks to the African Group and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for officially expressing, early in the process, their strong and unflagging support for the election of an Asian candidate as the next Secretary-General. Likewise, we are grateful to the Non-Aligned Movement countries for their consolidated support Asia's position in that regard.

The Asian countries are confident that Secreta General-designate Ban Ki-moon will contrib substantially to the further enhancement of the role prestige of our Organization, to reforms of Organization and the strengthening of the Un Nations system, to maintaining international peace security, to promoting economic and so development and growth, and to protecting enhancing human rights.

Mr. Ban is a seasoned diplomat with long, and extensive experience in the public service of home country, the Republic of Korea, including Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade and at the Uni Nations. His personal qualities, combined with diplomatic skills and a proven record accomplishment in management and administration all of which he now brings to the service of the Uni Nations — show that all Member States will be in g hands with him as the chief administrator of Organization as it struggles to address new tasks challenges.

The Asian region is proud of its many remarka developments and achievements in reducing pove attaining economic growth, providing more educat to children, promoting democratic values institutions, and so forth — although, admittedly, th are still many challenges. The country that Mr. hails from is a remarkable example of the phenome growth and change witnessed in Asia. The As Member States can say with pride that it is m appropriate that such a country is sending one of most outstanding public servants to steer the course the United Nations at the beginning of the twenty-f century.

Looking back over the selection process, seve talented, able and distinguished candidates besi Mr. Ban were presented from the Asian region. should remember that the unanimous action to appo Mr. Ban, both in the Security Council and in General Assembly, was in the end made possible by considerate cooperation of those other candidates would like to take the opportunity to thank them all well as the Member States which presented th candidatures, in that regard.

In conclusion, once again most warm welcoming the Secretary-General-designate, Mr. B

and wishing him every success in fulfilling his highly demanding mission at this crucial juncture in international relations and in the work of the United Nations in particular, the States members of the Asian Group pledge their firm support to him in the discharge of his formidable and weighty responsibilities in the months and years ahead.

Finally, I am sure there will be another opportunity to formally express our deep appreciation to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, but allow me on this occasion, on behalf of the Asian Group, to reaffirm our respect for Secretary-General Kofi Annan and reconfirm our commitment to continued cooperation with him as he perseveres in tackling the mountain of issues that remain to be addressed until his final day in office.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

Mr. Prica (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I feel particularly honoured to speak today on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States on this historic occasion.

First of all, I would like to extend a warm welcome and our congratulations to the newly appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, on his appointment to the most important post in today's world.

The whole world looks to him today with renewed hope that the Organization will continue to be led in a way that will maintain its credibility, independence and high efficiency, and to strive for the best global solutions for the sake of the further advancement of contemporary world society, calling upon his well-known extraordinary qualities, broad experience in international relations, and the unanimous support he enjoys among Member States.

The world has changed dramatically during the past decade, and new challenges have appeared on the horizon. The activities of the Secretary-General will continue to be challenging, taking into account difficult unresolved conflicts, continuing threats to peace and stability in the world, and the obstacles to further reform of the Organization in order to make it more efficient and capable of tackling important issues and implementing the right and broadly acceptable decisions.

Mr. Ban has taken upon his shoulders the very difficult, but at the same time very noble task of leading our planet towards a better life and better opportunities for all in a peaceful, secure and healthy environment. We have no doubt that, under his prudent leadership and with our full support, which he can count on, we shall continue the process of renewing and revitalizing the Organization. We are also convinced that, during his mandate, the Millennium Goals will reach the point at which we can proudly announce to the world that they have almost been achieved.

We firmly believe that his mandate will be designed with many new innovative initiatives that will result in a stronger and better United Nations, based on tolerance, diversity and multilateralism, and acceptable to the entire membership. His proven commitment to the preservation of peace and security, the promotion of sustainable development, the protection of human rights, a healthy environment and social justice, especially in the fight against poverty, is the best guarantee for success.

Also, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Eastern European Group to express our deepest appreciation to our current Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his tireless efforts and enormous personal contribution to the success of the United Nations under his decade-long leadership. His legacy will no doubt continue to be a foundation of our Organization's work for decades to come.

Let me once again, on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, congratulate Mr. Ban on his election and wish him every success. We look forward to friendly dialogue and cooperation, and he can count on our full support.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Ecuador, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Cordovez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Latin American and Caribbean countries avail themselves of this solemn opportunity, of such importance to the Organization, to reaffirm their faith and hope in the United Nations. We believe that the principles and purposes of the Charter are as valid and current today as they were upon their adoption 61 years ago in San Francisco. For that reason, we solemnly pledge to continue to support the United Nations efforts, to adhere to its objectives, and thereby to

broaden the possibilities of a better life for present and future generations.

We would like to convey our sincerest thanks to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his 10 years of diligent work on behalf of peace and development. With admirable tenacity, the Secretary-General has been able to transmit to the peoples of the world a message of serenity in moments of anguish, of hope in moments of despair, and of strength in moments of turbulence and adversity. His efforts in favour of collective security and his desire to eliminate the tensions generated by threats to international peace and security cannot be denied. We would like to extend our appreciation to his wife, Nane, for whom it was not easy to adjust to the rigours of her husband's tasks, but who has stood by him in his service to the Organization with exceptional loyalty and spirit.

We would like to hail the Secretary-General-designate, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and wish him the greatest success in the fulfilment of his duties. As he assumes his high position with the support and the confidence of the States Members of the Organization, his success will be ours. His diplomatic talent and his peaceable but firm temperament will enable him to fully accomplish the tasks and duties entrusted to him upon his designation. He can always rely on the support of the Latin American and Caribbean region, which has traditionally maintained with the United Nations since its foundation an intense working relationship with regard to the long list of matters whose outcomes have been of vital importance to our countries.

This change in the leadership of our Organization is taking place at a moment of uncertainty and even confusion about the role that the United Nations plays in today's world. International public opinion demands that the Security Council and other bodies of the Organization do a much better job. We live at a time of almost infinite opportunities, as well as unprecedented risks. The United Nations, it is said, should be the forum, the instrument and the model allowing the international community to take advantage of those opportunities and to foresee and neutralize potential risks. For those reasons, it is important to insist on the need for in-depth reform of the Organization, and that will undoubtedly be the main task and responsibility of our new Secretary-General.

Nevertheless, while the new Secretary-General must be ready and determined to introduce the necessary changes, the Member Governments must also demonstrate the political will to approve them. It is inconceivable that, although we have been debating reform of the Security Council for decades — I recall that we began discussing that issue in the 1970s — proposing untold numbers of formulas and issuing report after report on the item, that organ remains immutable and impassive to its critics for its lack of representativity and its diffident conduct in confronting the world's crises, such as the most recent crisis in the Middle East. An equal affirmation may be made regarding other aspects of the Organization's work.

Thus, the political resolve of States will emerge only if all reform efforts are defined and implemented on the basis of consensus. That has been the way in which the Organization has traditionally achieved its great successes of the past, which have enabled it to enjoy its current prestige and reputation. Let us all pledge to work to achieve consensus in order to build the bases for understanding and agreement that will enable us to advance down the road to reform. Our Organization will thereby become the more effective mechanism for collective security and international solidarity that all of us, from the powerful to the poor, so sorely need.

We reiterate to our Secretary-General-designate, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, our most sincere congratulations and best wishes in the performance of the transcendent mission that we have entrusted to him.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein, who will speak on behalf of the Western European and other States.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): I have the honour and privilege today to address this Assembly on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States on the occasion of the appointment of Mr. Ban Ki-moon as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, starting 1 January 2007.

The Group of Western European and other States warmly congratulates Mr. Ban Ki-moon on his election and welcomes him at the head of the Organization. As the chief executive of this Organization, he has the twofold task of working with Member States for the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as of efficiently managing the Secretariat. That is a complex and daunting challenge which requires active support from us, the Member States. The record and past

achievements of Mr. Ban give us confidence that he possesses the required skills to carry out both those functions efficiently and to steer the Organization through the tasks ahead.

We look forward to the leadership of the Secretary-General-elect at a time when the challenges to the multilateral system are manifold and complex and when the need for a strong United Nations is more urgent than ever. At the same time, we realize that it is we, the Member States, that are called upon to make the right decisions for the future of the Organization and that close, constructive and productive cooperation between the Secretary-General-elect and the membership is indispensable in order to maintain and strengthen the place of the United Nations in the international system. We therefore owe such cooperation to the peoples that we represent and to the Organization.

We welcome the fact that the appointment of the new Secretary-General is taking place well ahead of the end of the tenure of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and trust that the appointment today will ensure a smooth transition and the necessary continuity in the work of the United Nations. We also wish to emphasize that we continue to count, until the very end of his term, on the leadership of Secretary-General Kofi Annan which has served us so well over the past 10 years. We will all have a separate opportunity to extend our deep gratitude for his long years of excellent service to the United Nations and look forward to that occasion.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of the United States, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Bolton (United States of America): On behalf of the United States, the host country of the United Nations, I would like to welcome the appointment of Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon as the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The United States has had the privilege to work with Foreign Minister Ban throughout his distinguished career in Seoul, in Washington, D.C., and here in New York.

We believe that he is the right person to lead the United Nations at this decisive moment in its history, particularly as the United Nations struggles to fulfil the terms of the reform agenda that world leaders agreed to last fall. It will be up to Foreign Minister Ban to lead us as we build upon and complete the modest steps of reform that we have achieved to date. It will be up to all Member States to work with him to reform the United Nations.

We encourage all Member States to give Foreign Minister Ban the support he needs to act decisively to strengthen the United Nations, including during his first months, by shaping the Secretariat to meet the challenges ahead.

We are confident that Foreign Minister Ban will both represent and instil the highest standards of integrity within the United Nations system. We congratulate him on his appointment.

On behalf of the United States, I would also like to extend our appreciation to the other candidates for this position — President Vike-Freiberga, Deputy Prime Minister Surakiart, Under-Secretary-General Tharoor, Ambassador Dhanapala, Prince Zeid and Ambassador Ghani — and to the Member States that recommended them for consideration. We respect their deep commitment to bettering the United Nations and their continued leadership on world issues.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the United States, our deep appreciation to Secretary-General Annan for his tireless efforts during his many years of service to the United Nations, especially the past 10 as Secretary-General. I would also like to express our appreciation for the work of his top team of advisers, who will also be moving on to new challenges.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of South Africa, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I am honoured to extend our congratulations to Mr. Ban Ki-moon on his election as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, starting 1 January 2007. The Group of 77 and China wishes to convey our assurance to him of our support throughout his term in office.

The United Nations has weathered many storms over the past decades. The Organization has survived because of the stewardship of a long line of strong Secretaries-General who have always acted in the interests of the Organization and remained neutral and committed to the ideals set out in the Charter of the United Nations. We are encouraged by the assurances that we have received from Mr. Ban Ki-moon that he

intends to build on the foundation set by Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his predecessors.

In 2000, the heads of State and Government committed themselves in the Millennium Declaration to making this Organization stronger so as to be able to respond better to the many demands that we continue to place on it. Since then, we have made considerable progress in meeting the ambitions of the people of the world, especially the poor and the marginalized. However, a great deal remains to be done.

The challenge for the new Secretary-General will be to consolidate the progress made so far by ensuring that the Secretariat implements the decisions and mandates of the Organization, thereby maintaining the momentum we have built so far, and well into the future.

The Group of 77 and China believes that the development agenda is an important pillar of this Organization and one on which considerable effort is still needed. It was therefore encouraging to us that Mr. Ban Ki-moon, prior to his election, committed himself to advancing the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. I wish to assure him that the Group of 77 and China will support his efforts as Secretary-General in strengthening the global partnership on development.

The United Nations matters to us because it is located at the crossroads of the needs and desires of humanity. Without the United Nations, many people throughout the world would not have any hope for a better life. It is therefore in our interest to ensure that the Organization be effective, well-managed and accountable to Member States.

For that reason, it is imperative that the Secretary-General-elect act in the interests of the entire membership and listen to the views of each and every Member State. It is also imperative that Member States, in turn, "respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not ... seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties", as stated in Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Unlike at previous occasions, the General Assembly has elected the incoming Secretary-General well before he is expected to assume his responsibilities. We trust that the election of the Secretary-General in advance of his assuming o will allow for sufficient consultations with Me States and staff in order to prepare for the task a and ensure a smooth transition.

It is indeed a pleasant irony that the decisio the General Assembly to elect early the President o Assembly and other office-bearers was one of reforms undertaken at the time the Republic of K occupied the presidency of the General Assembl which Mr. Ban Ki-moon served as Chef de Cabin make that note for myself in case I should grow r ambitious than I am now.

In conclusion, allow me to take this opportu to convey our warm wishes and congratulation Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his sterling se to the United Nations. The Organization and membership owe Kofi Annan a tremendous amou gratitude and we will continue to support his ef until his last day with this Organization. At appropriate time, we will recall the contribution Mr. Annan to the Organization and pay tribute to for having kept faith with the poor and marginalized of the world despite all the pressure faced. For now, we wish once again to welc Mr. Ban Ki-moon and wish him the best.

The President: I give the floor to representative of Finland, who will speak on beha the European Union.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): On behalf of European Union, I would like to express our war congratulations to Mr. Ban Ki-moon on appointment as the next Secretary-General of United Nations. We are convinced that his pers skills and vast experience will enable him successfully lead the world Organization.

The European Union is a strong supporte effective multilateralism and the United Nations core. Mr. Ban Ki-moon can rely on our conti support for the world Organization and for personally as the new Secretary-General. I confident that, under his able leadership, the Me States can work successfully together in promo peace and security, development and human rights has our full support in advancing the ong comprehensive reform of the United Nations.

On behalf of the European Union, I want to him every success in carrying out the impo

responsibilities of his future tasks as the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We look forward to working in close cooperation with him. He is very welcome.

The President: I now invite Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General-designate, to make a statement.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon: I stand before the members of the General Assembly, deeply touched and inspired by their generous words of congratulation and encouragement. With boundless gratitude for the confidence placed in me by the Member States, and with an unswerving resolve to honour that trust, I humbly accept the appointment as the eighth Secretary-General of this great Organization, our United Nations. I wish to extend my deepest respect and appreciation to all the leaders and peoples of the Member States for their strong support.

Thank you, Madam, for graciously preparing and guiding the meeting today. I greatly look forward to supporting you and working with you as you wisely steer the Assembly towards a very successful session.

I follow in a line of remarkable leaders. They, too, faced this moment, each at a critical juncture in the Organization's history. Like me today, they must have pondered what the years ahead would hold at the helm of this dynamic institution. Each made important and lasting contributions to our common enterprise in upholding humanity's deepest values and highest aspirations.

In particular, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has astutely guided our Organization into the twenty-first century. He has defined an ambitious agenda that has made the United Nations truly indispensable to peace, prosperity and human dignity around the world. Our debt to his courage and vision is immeasurable. I resolve to build upon his legacy.

By completing the appointment of the next Secretary-General with such alacrity, the Members have opened an unprecedented opportunity. Never before has an incoming Secretary-General been given sufficient time to prepare; they have given me more than two months. I will use these weeks to consult widely on how best to proceed with our common agenda of reform and revitalization. I will listen attentively to Member's concerns, expectations and admonitions.

I am deeply honoured to become the second Asian to lead the Organization, following Mr. U Thant, who ably served the world four decades ago. It is quite fitting that Members have now turned to Asia again for the next Secretary-General to guide the United Nations system through its seventh decade. Asia is dynamic and diverse, and Asia aspires to take on greater responsibilities for the world. Having come so far and rising still, the region is living and shaping the full range of achievements and challenges of our current times.

Asia is also a region where modesty is a virtue, but the modesty is about demeanour, not about vision and goals. It does not mean a lack of commitment or leadership. Rather, it is a quiet determination in action to get things done without so much fanfare. That may be the key to Asia's success and to the United Nations future. Indeed, our Organization is modest in its means, but not in its values. We should be more modest in our words, but not in our performance. The true measure of success for the United Nations is not how much we promise, but how much we deliver for those who need us most. Given the enduring purposes and inspiring principles of our Organization, we need not shout its praises or preach its virtues. We simply need to live them every day, step by step, programme by programme, mandate by mandate.

The surge in demand for the United Nations services attests not only to the United Nations abiding relevance, but also to its central place in advancing human dignity. The United Nations is needed now more than ever before. The United Nations core mission in the previous century was to keep countries from fighting each other. In the new century, the defining mandate is to strengthen the inter-State system so that humanity may be better served amidst new challenges. From the Balkans to Africa, from Asia to the Middle East, we have witnessed the weakening or absence of effective governance, leading to the ravaging of human rights and the abandonment of long-standing humanitarian principles. We need competent and responsible States to meet the needs of "we the peoples" for whom the United Nations was created; and the world's peoples will not be fully served unless peace, development and human rights — the three pillars of the United Nations — are advanced together with equal vigour.

The road that we must pave towards a world of peace, prosperity and dignity for all has many pitfalls.

As Secretary-General, I will make the most of the authority invested in my Office by the Charter and the mandate the Members give me. I will work diligently to materialize our responsibility to protect the most vulnerable members of humanity and for the peaceful resolution of threats to international security and regional stability.

In order to meet those growing mandates and expectations, we have engaged in the most sweeping reform in the history of the Organization. The very scope of the reform has taxed the attention and energies of both the delegations and the Secretariat, but we must stay the course. We need to muster the human, institutional and intellectual resources, and to organize them properly. We should do our part in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, the expanding peace operations, the threats posed by terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, HIV/AIDS and other pandemics, environmental degradation, and the imperatives of human rights.

Let us remember that we reform not to please others, but because we value what this Organization stands for. We must reform because we believe in its future. To revitalize our common endeavour is to renew our faith not only in the United Nations programmes and purposes, but also in each other. We should demand more of ourselves, as well as of our Organization. To cut through the fog of mistrust is going to require more intensive dialogue. We cannot change everything at once, but if we choose wisely and work together transparently, flexibly and honestly, progress in a few areas will lead to progress in many more. Only the Member States can revitalize this Organization, but I will always be there to assist and facilitate as needed.

(*spoke in French*)

As Secretary-General, I am resolved to manage my Office openly and responsibly. I will seek to build consensus through a free exchange of ideas and critiques. Only through the candid, open testing of ideas and proposals can we identify better means of serving the peoples of the world. I will work actively in reaching out to all stakeholders. In particular, in order to bring the United Nations closer to the people, I will widely engage civil society in dialogue. I will seek the support and input of humanitarian advocacy groups, businesses and other constituents of the global citizenry for the good of the Organization. My tenure will be marked by ceaseless efforts to build bridges close divides. Leadership of harmony, not division, by example, not instruction, has served me well so I intend to stay the course as Secretary-General.

I will be fully accountable for the managemer this institution. Member States set the mandates provide the resources. If the resources are sufficient for the task at hand, I will not be shy a saying so, but once we in the Secretariat have take a task, we must accept full responsibility for achievement.

(*spoke in English*)

I am eager to join the ranks of the wo premier Secretariat. I have deep respect and admira for the able, dedicated and courageous men and wo who serve this Organization day in and day out, o in the face of danger and personal sacrifice. To the pledge my utmost support, dedication and solidarity

Maintaining their proud heritage, w vigorously holding them to the highest standard professionalism and integrity, will be a prime goa my tenure. The aim of Secretariat reform is no penalize but to reward, so that their talent and s experience and dedication may be fully mobilized properly utilized. It will reward hard work excellence to boost morale, making every accountable for his or her own action or inaction, pushing for greater gender balance, in particula senior levels.

That will be my guide as I rally the Secreta staff for our very best performance in serving Organization. As Secretary-General, I am far f perfect, and I will need the unsparing supp cooperation and trust of all represented here, bu pledge to serve them well, with all of my heart an the best of my abilities. I will seek excellence v humility. I will lead by example. Promises should made for the keeping. That has been my motto in li intend to stick to it as I work with all stakeholders f United Nations that delivers on its promises.

My heart is overflowing with gratitude tow my country and people who have sent me here to se It has been a long journey from my youth in war- and destitute Korea to this rostrum and these awes responsibilities. I was able to make the journey bec the United Nations was with my people in our dar days. It gave us hope and sustenance, security

dignity. It showed us a better way. So I feel at home today, however many miles and years I have travelled.

For the Korean people, the United Nations flag was and remains a beacon of better days to come. There are countless stories of that faith. One belongs to me. In 1956, when the cold war was raging around the world, as a young boy of just 12 I was chosen to read out a public message on behalf of my elementary school, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld. We urged him to help the people of a certain faraway European country in their fight for freedom and democracy. I hardly understood the deeper meaning of the message, but I knew that the United Nations was there for help in times of need.

Fifty years later, the world is a much more complex place, and there are many more actors to turn to. During these years, I have travelled many times around the world. I have been elated by the successes of the United Nations in making life better for countless people. I have also been pained by scenes of its failures. In too many places, I could feel the dismay over inaction of the United Nations or action that was too little or came too late. I am determined to dispel the disillusionment.

I earnestly hope that young boys and girls of today will grow up knowing that the United Nations is working hard to build a better future for them. As Secretary-General, I will embrace their hopes and hear their appeals. I am an optimist, and I am full of hope about the future of our global Organization. Let us work together for a United Nations that can deliver more and better.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 104.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.